

Appl. No. 09/840,156  
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 27, 2003

REMARKS

I.

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-31 are presently active in this application. Claims 1-21 have been cancelled.

II.

The Examiner's decision on page 2 of the office action making the requirement for restriction final is noted.

III.

The Examiner's objections to the drawings set forth on page 3 of the office action are noted. New drawing replacement sheets are submitted herewith illustrating the reference sign "A" in Fig. 5 and labeling Fig. 1 as prior art. In view of these corrections, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

IV.

The objection to claim 13 on page 3 of the office action is noted. The typographical error has been corrected in the new claims.

V.

Claims 17-21 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. As suggested by the Examiner, the limitation regarding the weighing means has been deleted from the new claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

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VI.

Claims 12, 13, and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The conflict in the claim language noted by the examiner has been corrected in the new claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

VII.

Claims 11, 12, 17, and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP (0 532 991). Claims 11, 12, 17 and 18 have been cancelled. Therefore, this rejection is moot.

VIII.

Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP (0 532 991) as applied to claims 11, 12, 17, and 18 and further in view of Hasten et al. ('894). Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled. Therefore, this rejection is moot.

IX.

Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP (0 532 991) in view of Tashiro et al. ('185). Claims 17 and 18 have been cancelled. Therefore, this rejection is moot.

X.

On page 10 of the office action, the examiner has indicated that claims 13 and 19-21 would be allowable if rewritten to (1) overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112 and/or the objections set forth in the office action and (2) to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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New independent claim 22 includes the substance of previously presented claim 13, and new independent claim 27 includes the substance of previously submitted claim 19. Accordingly, Applicant submits that those claims are allowable for the reasons stated on pages 10-12 of the office action.

Claims 23, 24, 25, and 26 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 22. Therefore, those claims are allowable along with independent claim 22.  
Claims 28, 29, 30, and 31 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 27. Therefore, those claims are allowable along with independent claim 27.

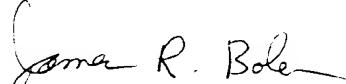
XI.

In view of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 22-31.

Respectfully submitted,

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